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Items 20, 26, 29, 32, 70 and 131 of the preliminary list*

Sustainable development

Agriculture development and food security

Advancement of women

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

Promotion and protection of human rights

Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Letter dated 1 June 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the hour to transmit to you, on behalf of the Namibian Presidency of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the text (in English and French) of the following four resolutions adopted by the 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Panama City, 15-20 April 2011) (see annex):

(a) Transparency and accountability in the funding of political parties and election campaigns (items 32, 70 and 131 of the preliminary list);

(b) Providing a sound legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral violence, improving election monitoring and ensuring the smooth transition of power (items 32, 70 and 131 of the preliminary list);

(c) Strengthening democratic reform in emerging democracies, including in North Africa and the Middle East (items 29, 32, 70 and 131 of the preliminary list);

(d) The role of parliaments in ensuring sustainable development through the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change (items 20, 26 and 131 of the preliminary list).

* A/66/50.

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I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly under items 20, 26, 29, 32, 70 and 131 of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Wilfried I. **Emvula**
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 1 June 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 124th IPU Assembly (Panama City, 20 April 2011)

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Considering that representative and participatory democracies function largely within the political party system as essential expressions of the political will of the people,

Recognizing that political parties require appropriate funding to fulfil their core functions, both during and between elections,

Mindful that it is to the benefit of the public, and to democracy as a whole, that political parties are adequately funded within an agreed framework of accountability and mechanisms for transparency,

Acknowledging that, in modern democracies, significant resources are required to conduct competitive election campaigns enabling political parties to communicate their policy proposals as broadly as possible,

Also recognizing that political party funding may be both public and private, direct and indirect (free broadcasting time on television and radio, tax remissions, use of public buildings and public election billboards, etc.), and that, in order to mitigate the risks associated with political party funding, measures have been put in place in many countries to regulate spending on elections and ensure transparency and accountability in the funding of political parties generally,

Noting that in systems where there is limited public funding of political parties, the importance of private funding increases, and vice versa,

Also noting that the concerns surrounding the private funding of political parties, which are often viewed as a question of political equality, relate to three main points: inadequate resources that result in political parties and candidates pursuing relationships with donors who expect certain gains should those parties come into power; some political parties being better

* The delegation of Sudan expressed a reservation on preambular paragraph 17.
The delegation of Algeria expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 9.

resourced than others; and cases where campaign finances come from compromised sources that expect a legislative or other benefit,

Recognizing that the aspects of private funding that need to be addressed concern the admissibility of anonymous donations, cash donations, donations by foreign natural and legal entities, foreign international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), State-owned enterprises and enterprises responding to calls to tender,

Noting that while codes of conduct for members of parliament and the executive have addressed accountability issues as they apply to elected representatives individually, there has been growing concern over the funding of political parties and the associated accountability of political parties, as a whole, to the people,

Further noting that consideration should be given to clear guidelines to regulate party and campaign finance (reasonable limitations on campaign finance, campaign finance reporting requirements, political finance reporting requirements, measures to prevent the misuse of State resources, the establishment of an independent regulatory body to monitor the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns, and appropriate sanctions for violations), in order to ensure that political parties remain accountable to citizens,

Recalling that Article 7.3 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which entered into force on 14 December 2005, provides that "Each State Party shall also consider taking appropriate legislative and administrative measures, consistent with the objectives of the Convention and in accordance with the fundamental principles of its domestic law, to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office and, where applicable, the funding of political parties",

Convinced that corruption represents a serious threat to the rule of law, democracy, human rights, equity and social justice,

Considering that political parties and election campaigns in all countries should aim to prevent and fight corruption,

Recognizing that the State should provide reasonable and impartial support to political parties, in accordance with a set of agreed criteria promoting equal access to resources under the principle of political pluralism and acting as a counterweight to corruption by eliminating the need for undue reliance on private donors,

Noting that public funding does not necessarily reduce the need for private funding, but should be used to mitigate the negative effects of excessive reliance on the latter and to support smaller political parties that may not have access to private sources of financing for their political campaigns, but whose contributions to political debate are essential to a healthy democracy,

Also noting that, even though women's presence in national parliaments has increased, lack of economic resources in the electoral process is a bigger challenge for women than for men,

Underscoring that temporary special measures, as outlined in Article 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, aimed at promoting gender equality should not be considered discriminatory and that the allocation of funds based on party support for women candidates could be seen as an incentive for achieving gender equity in parliaments and for increasing women's political participation,

Reiterating that gender equality and the empowerment of women are crucial components of any democratic system and that access to public and private funding can help promote gender equality in politics,

Noting that political parties are key for the achievement of balanced participation by women and men in political life,

Recognizing that many countries have adopted measures such as bans or limits on private political contributions, spending limits for election campaigns, increased public funding of political parties and controls over political expenditure,

Noting that some States have enacted legislation ranging from requiring political parties to put in place financial controls, public disclosure of funding sources and an array of criminal, administrative and financial sanctions to ensure compliance with the law,

Recognizing that public confidence in the democratic process could be undermined by political funding mechanisms that are not accountable and transparent, and that this should not only be a cause for concern for governments and parliaments, but also for international organizations working to enhance world democracy, and for political parties,

Noting that the reasons for regulating political party funding include the need to promote the democratic principles of transparency and accountability, prevent corruption, enhance competition among a broad range of political parties, accommodate a wide spectrum of political viewpoints, platforms and policies, and strengthen political parties and empower citizens to make informed decisions,

Recognizing that while mandatory disclosure of political party funding contributes to greater transparency and gives the public an opportunity to understand what factors might inform the actions of a political party, it might also discourage donors from funding political parties,

Mindful that disclosure laws, regulations and guidelines on campaign and political party funding seek to limit the negative impact of anonymous, foreign or corporate sources of funds to political parties and to ensure that all parties have an equal opportunity to compete, and that, although these measures may prove difficult to enforce in some countries, they are nevertheless

important for ensuring that citizens are able to hold their political parties and elected representatives to account,

1. *Invites* States to consider putting in place measures aimed at ensuring the independence of political parties so as to shield them from undue influence, and at avoiding corruption and excessive spending on election campaigns, including by capping spending during election campaigns;

2. *Recommends* that the call to reduce election spending must take into account gender equality, low levels of income, literacy, access to information and technology, and the vast distances between urban and rural areas in some countries;

3. *Considers* that political party funding should aim to give people a voice in the political and democratic process by encouraging a diversity of opinions and political perspectives, promoting a level playing field between large, well-funded political parties and those less endowed with financial means and generally encouraging meaningful participation in the political process by all actors — men and women — irrespective of their financial means and access to resources;

4. *Is convinced* that raising public awareness of political party funding enhances the functioning of democratic institutions and limits corruption;

5. *Recognizes* that the existence of different democratic and constitutional systems and political parties makes it difficult to set up universal accountability mechanisms for political party funding; *encourages* parliaments, through the IPU, nevertheless to continue to ensure accountability and transparency in keeping with the realities prevailing in different countries while drawing upon the basic principles enshrined in international instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

6. *Recommends* that parliaments, as institutions tasked with overseeing government action, civil society organizations and the media serve as watchdogs, educate citizens about the funding of political parties and continuously monitor the exercise of power in order to build a culture of transparency and responsibility in political life;

7. *Encourages* political parties to be part of the solution and become agents of change in a transparent and accountable manner;

8. *Recommends* the use of self-regulatory mechanisms, including internal codes of conduct and integrity for political parties;

9. *Invites* parliaments to consider putting in place measures to limit, prohibit or regulate funding inter alia by NGOs, corporate bodies and foreign sources, so as to ensure that they do not exert an undue influence on political outcomes;

10. *Recommends* that parliaments, governments and political parties ensure that legislation and mechanisms are put in place that require political parties and candidates to establish internal and financial controls with a view to greater financial accountability;

11. *Encourages* parliaments to adopt, in their legislative frameworks, anti-corruption regulations regarding the funding of political parties and election campaigns, in cases where specific laws, procedures or systems that provide for the regulation of such funding do not already exist;

12. *Calls upon* the IPU to develop a technical assistance and training programme on financial accounting systems and codes of conduct for political parties.

PROVIDING A SOUND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AIMED AT PREVENTING ELECTORAL VIOLENCE, IMPROVING ELECTION MONITORING AND ENSURING THE SMOOTH TRANSITION OF POWER

Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which, inter alia, provide that every citizen, regardless of gender, religion or race, has a right to take part in the conduct of public affairs directly or through freely chosen representatives, and that the will of the people should be expressed through free and fair elections based on universal and equal suffrage and secret ballots, in the full exercise of sovereignty of the people, so as to constitute the basis for legitimate and credible authority of government,

Recognizing that free and fair elections as a prerequisite for the peaceful transfer of power are the cornerstone of democratic practice,

Aware that the smooth transfer of power requires respect for the rule of law, transparent political and electoral institutions, a strong civil society and free and impartial media,

Considering that different countries are at different stages of democratic consolidation, but that all countries need to continue to strive to establish laws that provide optimal conditions for the holding of free and fair elections,

Underscoring that an effective electoral framework should entrench a series of basic elements, including periodic free and fair elections, secret ballots, a competitive and inclusive electoral process, equal and balanced access to the media and to State resources for all political parties, broad-based voting rights, a reliable voter registration process, and an independent and impartial election management body entrusted with organizing free and fair elections,

Expressing deep concern over the increase in electoral violence experienced in several countries in recent years for a variety of reasons: socio-economic disparities; gender inequality; ideological differences; weak governing institutions; inadequate or inappropriate power-sharing mechanisms; electoral systems that create real or perceived inequalities or marginalization; abuses perpetrated by military and/or security forces; unsound statutory and regulatory frameworks; lack of transparency; insufficient civic and voter education; poor transitional mechanisms; absence of sound electoral laws; lack of trust and confidence in election management bodies, of adequate measures to enfranchise eligible voters and of a level playing field; lack of fair, transparent, expeditious, effective

* The following delegations expressed a reservation on the following words of preambular paragraph 6, "international interference in internal electoral processes": Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cambodia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Iceland, Jordan, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.
The following delegations expressed a reservation on the following words of preambular paragraph 8, "with due regard for the principle of sovereignty, national integrity and relevant national legislation": Belgium, Canada and Sweden.

and accessible dispute resolution systems; widespread corruption; uncontrolled proliferation of firearms; polarization of community, ethnic or religious identities; international interference in internal electoral processes,

Noting the importance of credible and effective election management bodies that have the confidence of election stakeholders and the wider public, and that operate according to the principles of independence of action, impartiality, integrity, transparency, financial probity, accountability, professionalism, equal access, sustainability and cost-effectiveness,

Underscoring the crucial role played by national and international election observers and monitors in encouraging participation and in providing independent election assessments and a measure of transparency and accountability to the process, with due regard for the principle of sovereignty, national integrity and relevant national legislation,

Also underscoring the importance of ensuring that electoral management bodies and elections observers include women and have clear gender-equality objectives,

Concerned that women voters and candidates are disproportionately affected by electoral violence and are often vulnerable targets, or are deterred from participating in the political process by a climate of intimidation,

Stressing the need to define gender-based electoral violence, carry out research and develop indicators in order to assess the scope of the problem and monitor the situation,

Underscoring that gender-based electoral violence occurs prior to, during and after elections and includes physical violence and verbal abuse, and that the media's portrayal of women candidates can often be disrespectful and disparaging,

Noting that holding elections in conditions of instability and political fragility, particularly in post-conflict and post-crisis contexts, has often failed to produce credible and legitimate outcomes,

Underscoring that, during the peace-building process, only the national political will, expressed at free and fair elections, can lend full legitimacy to permanent national institutions,

Welcoming the IPU Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections and the Universal Declaration on Democracy, which underscore the need to ensure transparency of the electoral process and thus promote good governance and the rule of law,

Acknowledging the 2005 Declaration and Code of Conduct for International Election Observation endorsed by a host of organizations, including the United Nations and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), in addition to the IPU,

Underscoring the role and responsibility of parliaments and parliamentarians in shaping a sound and comprehensive legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral violence and ensuring a smooth transition of power once elections are over,

1. *Calls upon* parliaments, where necessary, to undertake constitutional and legislative reform, building on international obligations and commitments and taking into account local realities, so as to provide a sound legal framework for free and fair elections that

includes the adoption of electoral systems that provide for representative and inclusive outcomes, and for the smooth transfer of power;

2. *Urges* parliaments to conduct such electoral reform through a comprehensive, inclusive and open debate that fosters the broadest possible involvement of all stakeholders, authorities, political parties, media and civil society organizations in the electoral process;

3. *Encourages* national election management bodies to make greater efforts to ensure sustainability and cost-effectiveness, as well as the use of appropriate cutting-edge technologies, in particular information and communication technology, so as to make the electoral process people-friendly, efficient and safe from malpractice, while ensuring transparency and public confidence;

4. *Also encourages* electoral management bodies and election observers to pay specific attention to women's participation in the electoral process, as voters and as candidates, and invites electoral management bodies to develop gender guidelines and tools for their members;

5. *Urges* parliaments to enact legislation giving strong regulatory, investigative and prosecutorial powers to independent and impartial election management bodies so that they can safeguard the integrity and transparency of the electoral process by preventing instances of electoral fraud, intimidation and other improprieties and reporting them to the competent authorities;

6. *Encourages* parliaments, election management bodies, election monitors, civil society groups and international agencies, while respecting the sovereignty of each country, to work together between elections to plan for future elections, evaluate the outcomes and experiences of past elections, identify weaknesses in a given country's electoral apparatus and election legislation, and to take steps to redress such weaknesses, train election officials, update and strengthen voter registries, and educate voters;

7. *Calls upon* parliaments to enact legislation to ensure that political parties and candidates conduct their election campaigns according to prescribed norms, and that the election machinery functions in a non-partisan and professional manner to encourage a level playing field as well as a violence-free electoral and political environment, including through the application of harsh sanctions against perpetrators of such violence;

8. *Also calls upon* parliaments to consider formulating a legislative framework for the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns, and for the conduct of the campaigns themselves, in order to ensure that conditions of safety, order and transparency prevail and that the maximum number of citizens participate in the vote;

9. *Urges* all governments to redouble their efforts to ensure active and wider citizen participation in elections through an inclusive voter registration process that effectively accommodates both women and men, the disabled, national minorities, indigenous peoples, citizens living abroad, internally displaced persons, the homeless and other vulnerable groups;

10. *Encourages* parliaments to consider good practices and modalities in order to ensure the participation of citizens living abroad in the political process of their home countries;

11. *Urges* parliaments and governments to put in place legislation and independent, fair, transparent, expeditious and accessible electoral dispute settlement mechanisms that have the confidence of election stakeholders and the wider public;

12. *Invites* parliaments to organize study, awareness and discussion days on political rights and violence-free politics, in particular during election periods;

13. *Also urges* parliaments to develop legislation that, as appropriate, can regulate and guide the implementation of election results and the peaceful transition to a new government;

14. *Further urges* all the parties concerned in situations where countries are emerging from a crisis, or from violent community, ethnic or religious tensions, to conclude an inclusive political accord to allow the peaceful conduct of free and fair elections in the framework of institutions that are respectful of minority interests;

15. *Calls upon* parliaments and governments to ensure access by election observers and monitors, both national and international, taking into account local needs and the provisions of the law, to observe national elections, in keeping with international obligations, commitments and principles;

16. *Also urges* parliaments to draw up regulations establishing equal access to the mass media — both public and private — during election campaigns;

17. *Encourages* the deployment of election observation and monitoring missions from national, regional and international organizations well in advance of elections and for as long as possible after election results are announced;

18. *Also encourages* enhanced cooperation among election monitoring and observation missions from different national, regional and international organizations, taking into account local legislation;

19. *Invites* the United Nations and other relevant international organizations and partners to incorporate into their peace-building strategies, from the outset, human and financial assistance measures aimed at strengthening or establishing a set of democratic institutions, in particular a parliament elected through free and fair elections;

20. *Urges* parliaments in countries with a history of electoral violence to enact specific legislation restricting the use of firearms and live ammunition, and guaranteeing that military and security institutions and agents remain neutral and are not subject to manipulation for electoral purposes;

21. *Invites* parliaments and governments to enact strict and stringent laws prohibiting any attempt to destabilize the electoral process and providing for the prosecution of the perpetrators of acts of violence;

22. *Appeals* to civil society organizations, media groups, experts, academic institutions, human rights agencies and international organizations to sensitize citizens to their constitutional rights and obligations regarding elections, including through comprehensive civic and voter education programmes;

23. *Urges* parliaments and governments to promote among citizens, in particular youth, a culture of respect for the rule of law and a sense of political tolerance for diverse and opposing views;

24. *Calls upon* parliaments to enact appropriate legislation to guarantee the fundamental rights of citizens in the political process, including the right of individuals to cast secret ballots, the right to open information and freedom of expression, and the right to peaceful public demonstration;

25. *Urges* parliaments to amend election laws so as to incorporate genuine mechanisms for free and fair elections that conform to international democratic obligations and principles;

26. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure that, until political violence against women is eliminated and women are empowered both economically and politically, women's representation accounts for at least 30 per cent of parliamentary seats;

27. *Urges* parliaments and governments to ensure that electoral laws are stable and predictable by codifying them or enacting them in statute law and by entrenching the basic principles of electoral democracy and the right to vote and to run for office in the national constitution so as to prevent manipulation of election rules;

28. *Further urges* governments to ensure that constituencies are drawn up in a way that is predictable, transparent and not subject to change close to elections, so as to avoid manipulation of electoral systems;

29. *Appeals* to the United Nations, other relevant international organizations and development partners to provide the support and sustainable, cost-effective technical assistance needed to build the capacity of national election management bodies, including improved working conditions for their staff, thereby encouraging appropriate electoral reforms, and to promote better voter and civic education, particularly in emerging democracies;

30. *Calls for* greater cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU on the prevention of electoral violence, the smooth and peaceful transition of political power, and the implementation throughout the electoral cycle of relevant recommendations made by election observation missions, wherever they are deployed.

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC REFORM IN EMERGING DEMOCRACIES, INCLUDING IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Noting that the popular uprisings seeking to consolidate democracy that have spread across the Middle East and North Africa are the most prominent social and political development to have taken place in the months leading up to the 124th Assembly,

Affirming the rights of those peoples and countries to determine their own political future, and *recalling* that democracies should reflect a diversity of histories and cultures,

Also affirming that democracies should all be built on recognized norms, standards and principles, including those relating to human rights, equality, including gender equality, transparency and accountability, and respect for plurality of opinion,

Expressing concern for the humanitarian impact of the political changes in the region on vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, and *noting* that 2011 marks the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day,

1. *Affirms* the importance of holding free and fair elections as soon as practicable;

2. *Also affirms* the particular importance of empowering women, including by ensuring their full participation in the democratic process;

3. *Urges* all parties to refrain from violence and ensure in particular that human rights are respected;

4. *Calls on* all governments to respect the right to peaceful self-determination of peoples;

5. *Underscores* the pivotal role the IPU can play in assisting fledgling democracies.

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Noting that:

(a) Following a steady drop in poverty levels between 1990 and 2007, hunger rose sharply in 2009 according to the United Nations, and that 925 million persons will go hungry in 2011 according to the latest estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;

(b) The food crisis of 2007-2008 revealed the international community's vulnerability with regard to food security;

(c) Arable land is being expanded to the detriment of forested areas and fragile ecosystems;

(d) Desertification is being caused in many places by long droughts and poor land use;

(e) The United Nations has indicated that the world has lost 13 million hectares of forest every year for the past 10 years, thereby rendering the environment more vulnerable, without counting the 60,000 km^2 lost each year to desertification;

(f) Deforestation accounts for 14 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions and consequent climatic change;

(g) Many regions in the world, notably the Middle East and North Africa, find themselves in a difficult situation regarding water supply, with the Sahel countries suffering from constant water shortages;

(h) This situation heightens the risk of conflict over access to and the use of water resources;

(i) Many countries, in particular developing countries, are hard hit by collapsing exports, capital flight and rising unemployment;

(j) Over the past decades, agriculture has too often been neglected in both national and international policies, thereby contributing to conflict and instability;

Also noting that:

(a) Governments are obliged by the growing needs of a burgeoning urban population and intensive agriculture — both thirsty for water — to build new dams on rivers and streams and to increase the number of high-speed pumps extracting water from the water table, but are unable to take the measures required to ensure a more sustainable use of water;

(b) Seventy per cent of the fresh water used worldwide is for agricultural production, while competing claims on water for other purposes are increasing;

(c) The quality of fresh water is being lowered due to the intensive use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides in agriculture, industrial effluents from the growing number of industrial units and untreated domestic sewage from a burgeoning population;

(d) For some years now, certain regions have been experiencing an unusual overabundance of water, while others find themselves suffering increasingly from water shortages;

Further noting that:

(a) Population figures have undergone significant change marked by:

- lower birth rates and an ageing population in countries of the North;
- a high birth rate in Africa, the level of which depends on the country;
- exponential urbanization compounded by higher levels of migration to coastal areas; and
- more significant migratory flows — forced or voluntary — as a result of armed conflicts or for economic reasons;

(b) According to certain projections, in the next 50 years, the population of almost all developed countries will be smaller and older as a result of lower fertility rates and longer life expectancy;

(c) All countries and regions of the North need immigration to prevent their population from declining, but that the level of immigration, based on past experience, varies greatly owing to the immigration policies adopted by each country;

(d) Africa is experiencing an unprecedented baby boom and its population will be almost 2 billion by 2050;

(e) There are about 200 million migrants in the world today, representing 3 per cent of the global population;

(f) Expatriation of highly educated human resources impoverishes developing countries and causes them to lag further behind in terms of science and technology;

Aware that:

(a) There is a direct link between the use of land, soil, water, biodiversity, other natural resources and food production, on the one hand, and between food production and poverty on the other;

(b) Poverty is more pronounced in rural areas in developing countries, where many farmers are finding it difficult to sustain agricultural production and make a living;

(c) Overcoming hunger requires an increase in both small-scale and large-scale agriculture and effective policies that focus on both categories and are based on sustainable production and environmental protection;

(d) The private sector on the national and international levels has a key role to play in sustainable agriculture and food security, food production, processing and marketing, and in the development and application of new technologies, including eco-efficient and responsible investments;

(e) The allotment of more and more arable and forested land for the production of biofuels compounds the growing imbalance between the supply of and demand for foodstuffs;

(f) The growing demand at the global level for biofuels, compounded by the heightened need for land, may put pressure on marginal lands that are used for subsistence farming by the poor in rural areas;

(g) Sustainable development in rural areas should focus on the construction of social networks, such as cooperatives and knowledge centres, where people can acquire knowledge and qualifications, combine them and hand them down to the next generation;

Mindful that agriculture, food security, population growth and climate change are closely linked,

Considering that management of the world's natural resources (soil, land, forests, wildlife, marine and freshwater products, water, energy and air) has to become more sustainable, focusing on renewal (sustainable use) and conservation instead of depletion and spending, while pursuing the goals of sustainable economic and social development,

Aware that the multiple challenges facing the world in terms of climate change, ecosystem degradation, food insecurity, and the financial and economic crises require an

integrated response ensuring that short-term emergencies are addressed while for long-term strategies for sustainable development, i.e. strategies that meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs,

Underscoring the importance of achieving sustainable fisheries in order to prevent overfishing of the world's oceans, thereby safeguarding fragile ecosystems,

Also underscoring that an integrated and sustainable approach has to be adopted for the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change,

Acknowledging that in order to implement an integrated approach, research, education and the proper application of research results are vital, and that traditional and indigenous knowledge needs to be linked with modern technologies and the latest scientific knowledge about sustainable agricultural production, in particular food production and the sustainable use of natural resources, including poverty reduction in rural areas,

Underscoring that the growth of the world population (approx. 9 billion by 2050) will require higher food production, and that increasing water and energy shortages hamper food production, which inter alia drives migration flows,

Also underscoring that growth in the agriculture sector, particularly in food production, remains fundamental for poverty alleviation, economic growth and environmental sustainability,

Highlighting that it is equally crucial to improve agricultural productivity (including water usage, integrated land and water management, and sustainable agricultural intensification — more with less) without expanding areas under cultivation, and to halt environmental degradation (including biodiversity loss and curbing and reversing land degradation and desertification),

Also highlighting that, in order to avoid large-scale migration and the high risks it poses for stability, peace and security in many regions of the world, it is crucial to provide farmers and other people living in rural areas with the conditions, opportunities and resources they need to increase their food production or incomes, send their children to school, and enjoy rising living standards and fulfilling lives,

Considering the need to devise innovative sources of financing with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), supplement official development assistance, guarantee stable flows of funds in the face of long-term needs and facilitate the concerted management of development aid between countries of the North and countries of the South,

Acknowledging that it is critical for countries to share experiences and innovative technologies and cooperate in training and developing human and technical capacities,

Convinced that development policies should focus on providing water-access and transfer systems in and to areas that suffer from water shortage,

Aware that many technologies and much of the knowledge needed are already available, but that their wider dissemination and uptake are key challenges that must be addressed,

Considering that developing countries, with their growing populations and rising living standards, should be at the centre of agricultural and rural revival and that for many of them, halting and reversing land degradation and desertification is a high priority,

Cognizant of the fact that many developing countries need to urgently boost agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner,

Aware that intensifying agriculture for food security must include a vigorous response to major environmental changes such as climate change, desertification, land degradation and drought,

Considering that Africa and Asia, above all, should benefit from a sustainable green revolution, that is, an agricultural productivity revolution that is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable,

Also considering that a green revolution, particularly in Africa, should be tailored to the needs of diverse local agro-ecological conditions and cropping systems,

Underscoring the major role of the agricultural sector in feeding a world population of 9 billion in the coming decades,

Also underscoring that the rise in commodity prices affects first and foremost the poorest importers of agricultural products and that the extreme volatility of commodity prices threatens food security,

Further underscoring that a radically different outlook is needed and that agriculture should no longer be seen as a cause of environmental degradation but as part of the solution to improve environmental sustainability,

Aware that agriculture is at the heart of poverty eradication, sustainable development and, increasingly, climate change,

Also aware that achieving gender equality in agriculture and rural labour markets would generate significant gains for agricultural and rural development, food security and society as a whole,

Underscoring that measures to provide an enabling environment for investment in sustainable agriculture and rural development and for tackling the structural causes of food insecurity are needed by both small-scale and large-scale farmers,

Also underscoring that inclusive and secure access to finance, in particular for millions of small-scale farmers, has to be promoted, with due regard for gender equality and the important role of women in agriculture,

Convinced that it is critical to put in place appropriate land tenure systems for private and communal land, so as to promote sustainable agriculture and improve access to land, in particular for small-scale farmers,

Also convinced that the active engagement of all actors, including local government, civil society and private sector partners, should be mobilized in the planning and implementation of policies and practices,

Underscoring the important role efficient food distribution systems and well-functioning markets, at the national, regional and international levels, can play in ensuring global food security and promoting sustainable development,

Also underscoring that it is important to generate opportunities for higher incomes by adding value to the production and supply chain,

Acknowledging that the private sector must play a central role in expanding agriculture through production, building agricultural value chains and assessing the potential of new technologies,

Considering that, in order to promote sustainability, cisgenetic modifications are preferable to transgenetic ones,

Acknowledging that investment in revitalizing developing country agriculture and promoting sustainable rural development will need to be supported by new and additional resources from all quarters, including private, public, domestic and international sources,

Aware that while the increase in large-scale land acquisitions in developing nations by foreign investors might bring opportunities to local people, including guaranteed outlets, employment, investment in infrastructure, and higher agricultural productivity, local people might also lose access to land, water, and other resources, particularly if they are not included in the land allocation decision-making process and their land rights are not protected,

Underscoring that an enabling environment is needed to support investments and domestic, regional and international partnerships, North-South and South-South partnerships, and public-private partnerships among relevant stakeholders,

Convinced that it is crucial that women be given the same access as men to land, technology, financial services, education and markets,

Also convinced that parliamentarians and their constituencies worldwide, together with governments, private stakeholders, and national and international agencies, have a role to play in heightening awareness of the close relationship between climate change, food security and agriculture,

Considering that land for agriculture and other natural resources should be exploited in a sustainable manner,

Also considering that the green revolution can only succeed if it goes hand in hand with a comprehensive and coherent set of political decisions, including financial incentives for small-scale farmers, communication and education policies and land management reform,

Noting the MDGs, the related Action Plan and the commitments contained therein concerning the fight against poverty and hunger,

Aware of the importance of fisheries for food security, including as a source of income,

Knowing that forests are very important for many people's livelihoods and employment, including sustainable forestry management,

1. *Invites* the IPU, parliamentarians and parliaments to act as agents of change in identifying an integrated and sustainable approach to the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change;

2. *Encourages* parliamentarians and parliaments to engage all actors, including local and regional governments, civil society and private sector partners, in the planning and implementation of policies;

3. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to acknowledge the crucial role of women in sustainable agricultural development by adopting legislation and supporting policies and measures aimed inter alia at eliminating discrimination against women and at increasing women's access to agricultural resources, education and training, family planning and maternity health services, labour markets, technologies, micro credits, finance and other facilities, since women's empowerment is key to poverty eradication and sustainable development;

4. *Urges* parliamentarians to ensure that discussions about land use and land acquisition remain on the national and international political agendas;

5. *Encourages* parliamentarians to help draw up or propose plans for regional development and land use that are predicated on the imperative need to save agricultural land;

6. *Calls upon* national parliaments and parliamentarians to encourage their governments to take all necessary measures to restore degraded land;

7. *Invites* parliamentarians to support policies and measures at the national, regional and international levels in order to improve water efficiency in agriculture and promote integrated land and water management and the development of innovative water efficiency technologies;

8. *Calls upon* parliaments and parliamentarians to develop and harmonize legislation for strict and adequate standards on the manufacture and use of fertilizers, pesticides and biotechnology products;

9. *Urges* parliaments and parliamentarians to initiate or strengthen legislative mechanisms for sustainable forest management and prohibit any form of exploitation that does not conform to terms of reference that impose reforestation and the reconstitution of forested areas;

10. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to include, as part of their action, measures aimed at halting biodiversity loss and promoting plant and animal genetic diversity;

11. *Invites* parliamentarians to give broad backing to the premise that a transition to sustainable agriculture should be part of the sustainable development solution;

12. *Calls upon* parliamentarians, in particular those in developing countries, to support and encourage rural development policies;

13. *Encourages* parliamentarians in developed countries to call for transparent decision-making processes, including the setting of clear targets for stepped up official development assistance for agriculture;

14. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to support sustainable growth strategies incorporating policies on agricultural development, food production, rural development and the sustainable use of natural resources;

15. *Urges* parliamentarians and governments to create the requisite conditions and provide opportunities and resources for the most vulnerable farmers to have access to land, increase their food production, participate in knowledge-sharing, have access to education and enjoy rising living standards;

16. *Also urges* parliamentarians to support initiatives aimed at enhancing the way global agricultural commodity markets function, in particular by making these markets more transparent, regulating the corresponding derivatives markets, strengthening the coordination of national and regional agricultural policies and establishing new international mechanisms to support developing country importers;

17. *Encourages* governments and parliaments to advocate environmental awareness and educate the public about food waste-reduction measures and coordinated action against environmental degradation;

18. *Calls upon* parliamentarians, in close cooperation with national, regional and international scientific institutions and agricultural organizations, to organize conferences, seminars and workshops to discuss, develop and support action to improve the sustainable development of agriculture, in particular food production, the sustainable use of natural resources and demographic development;

19. *Invites* the IPU to consider annual reports on global developments in these fields at IPU Assemblies.